(f) The promotional effort, undertaken by the Department of Information Technology includes organization of training and awareness workshops and seminars and waiving of fee payable by the ISP's for the first six weeks of operations.

Expansion of computers in rural areas

†1935. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme with regard to the expansion of computers in the rural areas of the country;

(b) if so the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 1. The Department of Information Technology (DIT) has taken the following initiatives:

- National Informates Centre Network (NICNET) backbone and e-governance support have been provided to both Central and State Govts, and UT administrations.
- Computerization of the Land Records has been implemented in 2400 taluks in the country.
- Government to Citizens (G2C) application packages relating to Government Schemes, Govt, forms, grievances etc. have been developed in various States.
- Software solutions such as Rural Soft 2000, Rural Bazar, PriaSoft, eNRICH etc. have been developed to address specific problems of rural development.
- Schemes, such as AGMARKNET in all States/UTs (750 Wholesale Markets) and Community Information Centres (CICs) in all 487 Blocks of North-Eastern States, including Sikkim

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

harness the power of IT towards socio-economic changes for rural and tribal masses.

- Setting up of Media Lab Asia for reaching the benefits of ICT technologies to rural and poor people. Media Lab Asia's research will focus on three technical initiatives namely—Bits for all, World Computer and Tomorrow's tools.
- Established 4 Samadhan Kendras in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Temil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh under a pilot scheme for the benefit of rural masses.

2. Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) has implemented the following schemes:

- Funds have been provided to States/UTs for installation of computers at District and Tehsils/Taluk Centres and so far 582 districts and 2970 tehsils/taluks/blocks of the country have been brought under the programme.
- Under Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission, MRD provides assistance to the States and UTs for procurement of Computer Hardware, Office automation packages, training of manpower and development of application software for computerization up to the division level officers of the line departments.
- MRD has undertaken a pilot project for providing V-SAT connectivity to 15 District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs) for providing internet facilities and a Web based software for poverty alleviation and rural development programmes in 15 districts spread over 11 States.

(c) Does not arise.

Pre-paid and post-paid mobile services in Karnataka

1936. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) how many persons have, so far, joined pre-paid and post-paid mobile services in Karnataka;